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July 17, 2003

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The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2138 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to request that the Committee hold hearings concerning the application of the antitrust laws to major college athletics, including the impact of the College Football Bowl Championship Series arrangement, and recent actions by the Atlantic Coast Conference inducing the University of Miami and Virginia Tech to depart the Big East Conference.

Ever since the founding of the Bowl Championship series (BCS) in 1998, the vast majority of the proceeds and power has been concentrated among sixty-three schools in six major conferences (the ACC, Pacific-10, Big Ten, Southeastern, Big 12 and Big East). Indeed, in the 2002-2003 season, only \$5 million of a total BCS revenue of \$109 million went to non-BCS colleges.

This aggregation of power would appear to create a system that favors BCS schools in the six major conferences and largely eliminates the opportunity for other universities to participate in major post-season bowl games and the lucrative pay out packages associated with these games. In fact, since the BCS's inception in 1998, not one college from any of the other major conferences has gone to a BCS bowl. The recent ACC raid on the Big East threatens to exacerbate this problem. Under the BCS ranking system, the departure of Miami and Virginia Tech from the Big East could result in the Big East losing its BCS membership, thus shrinking the number of BCS schools from 63 to 55.

The potential impact of this conglomeration of money and power is having a cascading impact far beyond major college football, as the de facto exclusion of non-BCS schools from major bowl games is causing those schools to have lower athletic budgets, inferior athletic facilities, and rising deficits. For example, many attribute the fact that in three out of the last four

The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.

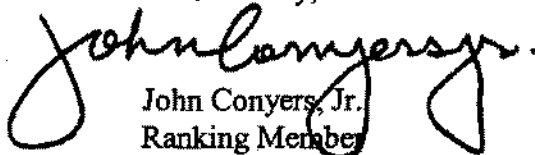
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years, 14 of the 16 teams to make the third round of the NCAA men's basketball tournament were from BCS schools results from the disparity created by the BCS. There are also concerns that the disparities created in allocating sports revenues can have a significant, negative impact on Title IX opportunities for women in college athletics.

The last thing any of us want to see is a conspiracy among our major colleges leading to a dynamic where conferences raid other conferences, the college athletic world is divided into economic haves and have nots, and ever shrinking budgets for athletes and students truly in need of aid. This is the very situation, the antitrust laws were designed to avoid.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Conyers, Jr.", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member